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09/588,037	06/05/2000	J. Gregory Stout	A-68146/MAK/LM	8559

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EXAMINER

KALINOWSKI, ALEXANDER G

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3626

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/588,037	Applicant(s) Stout
	Examiner Alexander Kalinowski	Art Unit 3626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Jun 30, 2003

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 6) Other: _____

Art Unit: 3626

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-8 are presented for examination. Applicant filed an amendment on 1/3/2003 amending claims 1-8. Applicant further filed a request for continuing examination on 6/30/2003 along with an amendment amending claim 1. In light of Applicant's submission of a new declaration, the Examiner withdraws the objection to the specification. In light of Applicant's amendment and arguments, the Examiner withdraws the grounds of rejection of claims 1-8 based on 35 USC 103. However, new grounds of rejection of claims 1-8 based on 35 USC 103 are established in the instant office action as set forth in detail below.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-8 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Request for Continued Examination

3. The request filed on 6/30/2003 for a Continued Examination (RCE) is acceptable and a RCE has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3626

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deaton et al., Pat. No. 5,642,485 (hereinafter Deaton) in view of Kepecs, Pat. No. 6,009,411 and Burton et al., Pat. No. 5,025,372 (hereinafter Burton).

As to claim 1, Deaton discloses a method for storing and retrieving consumer transaction information (see abstract), the method comprising the following steps:

 during a first transaction by a consumer at a first merchant, capturing transaction information (i.e. the system contains a database which contains relevant information about the frequency of the customer's transactions, the amount of the transaction ...)(col. 59, lines 54-60 and col. 61, line 49 - col. 62, line 52).

 storing captured said transaction information on a server (i.e. transaction processor 112)(see Fig. 1 and col. 11, lines 4-17).

 Deaton does not explicitly disclose applying captured said transaction information to a second transaction involving said consumer at a second merchant.

 However, Kepecs discloses applying that captured transaction information to a transaction involving the consumer at a second merchant (i.e. master stores 23 ... criterion fields can be matched by the past purchasing patterns of consumers ... match customer, criteria, and discount

Art Unit: 3626

information ... database contains information on the particular retailers who stock each of the discounted items)(see Fig. 3, col. 8, lines 29-46 and line 64 - col. 9, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include applying captured said transaction information to a second transaction involving said consumer at a second merchant as disclosed by Kepecs within the Deaton method for the motivation of providing a customer discount choices of items available in a collection of stores over a network (col. 2, lines 40-48).

Deaton and Kepecs do not explicitly disclose during a first transaction, capturing transaction information regarding said transaction from a card presented by said consumer but lacking memory updated to record said first transaction and

applying captured said transaction information at the second merchant not required to be associated with said first merchant.

However, Burton discloses during a first transaction, capturing transaction information regarding said transaction from a card presented by said consumer but lacking memory updated to record said first transaction (i.e. determination as to whether point and hence dollars are to be awarded fro credit instrument use for each participant ...)(col. 13, lines 16-30). Burton also discloses applying captured said transaction information at the second merchant not required to be associated with said first merchant (i.e. those participating with the credit instrument may desire to use the withheld amount to allocate funds for merchandise or travel under traditional incentive

Art Unit: 3626

programs)(col. 14, lines 36-43 and col. 30, lines 26-69). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include applying captured said transaction information at the second merchant not required to be associated with said first merchant as disclosed by Burton within the Deaton and Kepecs method for the motivation of offering participants of the incentive program an unlimited degree of flexibility for selection of their own personal award thereby providing motivation for participants to use the incentive program (col. 4, line 63 - col. 5, line 4).

As to claim 2, Deaton does not explicitly disclose the method of claim 1, further including prior to step c a step of

identifying the consumer in a transaction at the second merchant.

However, Kepecs discloses identifying the consumer in a transaction at the second merchant (i.e. Customer_No)(col. 10, lines 5-18). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include identifying the consumer in a transaction at the second merchant as disclosed by Kepecs within the Deaton, Kepecs and Burton method for the motivation of permitting the customer to track his or her total consumption history (col. 2, lines 11-19).

Art Unit: 3626

As to claim 3, Deaton does not explicitly disclose the method of claim 1, further including prior to step c a step of wherein before the step of applying, the following step is performed

communicatively coupling the first and second merchants and the server by means of an internet.

However, Kepecs discloses communicatively coupling the first and second merchants and the server by means of an internet (Fig. 1 and Fig. 3). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include communicatively coupling the first and second merchants and the server by means of an internet as disclosed by Kepecs within the Deaton, Kepecs and Burton method for the motivation of permitting the customer to track his or her total consumption history (col. 2, lines 11-19).

As to claim 4, Deaton discloses the method of claim 1, further including prior to step c a step of wherein the step of capturing comprises capturing consumer information at the first merchant (i.e. the system contains a database which contains relevant information about the frequency of the customer's transactions, the amount of the transaction ...)(col. 59, lines 54-60 and col. 61, line 49 - col. 62, line 52).

Art Unit: 3626

As to claim 5, Deaton discloses the method of claim 1, during step a includes capturing consumer loyalty information at the first merchant (i.e. frequency of customer's transactions)(col. 59, lines 54-60).

As to claim 6, Deaton does not explicitly disclose the method of claim 1, wherein step B includes storing the captured selection information on a server external to the first merchant.

However, Kepecs discloses the step of storing comprises storing the captured selection information on a server external to the first merchant (i.e. DAP and DAP Internet Server)(Fig. 1 and Fig. 3). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include the step of storing comprises storing the captured selection information on a server external to the first merchant as disclosed by Kepecs within the Deaton, Kepecs and Burton method for the motivation of permitting the customer to track his or her total consumption history (col. 2, lines 11-19).

As to claim 7, Deaton discloses the method of claim 1, wherein step b includes forwarding the captured selection information to the server (i.e. transaction processor 112)((see Fig. 1 and col. 11, lines 4-17).

As to claim 8, Deaton does not explicitly disclose the method of claim 1, wherein the step c includes

Art Unit: 3626

applying that captured transaction information to a transaction involving the consumer at a second merchant and initiated by a browser on a personal computer connected to the internet.

However, Kepecs discloses applying that captured transaction information to a transaction involving the consumer at a second merchant and initiated by a browser on a personal computer connected to the internet (i.e. consumers use their computers 10 for connection to the computer 11 of the DAP through the internet (col. 4, lines 31-47 and col. 9, lines 31-44). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to include applying that captured transaction information to a transaction involving the consumer at a second merchant and initiated by a browser on a personal computer connected to the internet as disclosed by Kepecs within the Deaton, Kepecs and Burton method for the motivation of providing a customer discount choices of items available in a collection of stores over a network (col. 2, lines 40-48).

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander Kalinowski, whose telephone number is (703) 305-2398. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM to 6:30 PM. In addition, the examiner can be reached on alternate Fridays.

If any attempt to reach the examiner by telephone is unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas, can be reached on (703) 305-9588. The fax telephone number for this

Art Unit: 3626

group is (703) 305-7687 (for official communications including After Final communications labeled "Box AF").

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th Floor, receptionist.



Alexander Kalinowski

Patent Examiner

Art Unit 3626

September 16, 2003